1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
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dead man can pass through the cave into the land of the dead, where he will be re-born into a new life after death. This doubtless explains Godefroy's statement that in Vao, as in Santo, the designs were formerly drawn by women. Among the Tamils of South India designs in some cases almost identical with those from Malekula are drawn by living Hindu women before the thresholds of their houses in the month when the sun dies and is re-born, and the designs are straightway walked over by their husbands.[1] A more classical instance is Vergil's account at the beginning of the *Sixth Aeneid* of how Aeneas, seeking to visit his father Anchises in Hades, first has to visit the female sibyl who guards the entrance, near which is a painted representation of the Cretan labyrinth, and of the well-known events connected with it.[2] Nearer home still are the Celtic stone crosses, symbols of re-birth, with their entangling designs. Rather later in time are the labyrinth designs executed on the floor of the nave or over the west door of many mediaeval Gothic churches, and the turf mazes which the village boys run round in our own country,[3] while today in parts of Scotland and north England women draw what in the north are called "tangled thried" designs on their thresholds and hearthstones as a prophylactic against evil influences or witches.[4]

Psychological significance: "Dream-walking" on Vao.

From this brief summary it will be seen that the labyrinth has a long cultural history. But it would not persist in so many places if it had not also a deep psychological significance. Many people have labyrinthine dreams in which they try to prove the mysteries of life. Somnambulistic phenomena also are often of this nature. Nor are such things confined to our own culture.

Godefroy describes a culturally recognised condition of dream-walking on Vao called *rel pul*, words which mean literally walking (*rel*) in a dream (*pul*).[5] He describes it as "walking in a dream, or rather a dream-state induced while a man walks about, which lasts all day long. I have a strong suspicion that the *rel pul* is a ritual act, since the dreamer must be in a state of fast beginning the evening before; he does not speak, he goes alone, with a switch in his hand, sits down from time to time, and if a friend joins him, such words as pass between them must be spoken in a very low voice. A man who is doing *rel pul* is never criticised nor regarded as being lazy (*nime mat-mat*, 'having the hands dead,' i.e. paralysed), as are those who stay behind on Vao doing nothing instead of going with all the rest to work in the mainland gardens."[6]

[1] Layard, 7, p. 124.
[2] See Knight. Till the publication of the Malekulan evidence this passage had remained a puzzle to scholars. Mr. Knight was the first to explain it.
[3] See Matthews. [4] See Banks, p. 78.
[5] Compare Atchin *por-por*, Mota *qore*(*-qore*), both meaning "to dream."
[6] Godefroy, 1, 1934, p. 210.

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Malekulan labyrinth belongs to early unstereotyped kind.

158 531 171 Such dream-walking represents an introverted state sanctioned by culture in which, so far as we know, the dream-walker follows no stereotyped route. It is therefore of interest when compared with the question of labyrinth designs, since in the early history of the labyrinth this also had no stereotyped form, being simply a complicated way intended to confuse or baffle those who were not familiar with its plan. Stereotyped forms of labyrinth such as that of the well-known labyrinth design of the coins of Knossos did not occur till the labyrinth had lost its meaning as a form of initiation through which the candidate wishing to solve the mysteries of death and re-birth had to pass.

Now used as games of skill and named according to the designer's fancy.

531 524 An examination of the Malekulan labyrinth designs shows that these belong to such an early unstereotyped stage, since, of all those collected in Malekula and the neighbouring islands both by myself and Deacon, and in Raga by Miss Hardcastle and Dr. Firth,[1] no two are alike. Indeed, now that they are used as games of skill this tendency, as with cats' cradles, with which they are probably allied, now serves to stimulate the creative ingenuity of the natives, who, while certain designs, of course, become traditional and are copied over and over again, constantly invent new ones as an intellectual pastime. Each new design is given a name, as a rule to suit the designer's fancy, though in the case of one particular type, as will be shown, the names almost always have to do with ghosts.

Two Main Types of Design

531 While, as we have seen, the individual designer is at liberty to exercise his fancy to a certain extent, he is, however, in other respects strictly confined within the limits described at the beginning of this chapter, namely the tracing of a continuous-line design meandering in and about a framework consisting of:

A, straight lines, often set at right angles and crossing one another, which I will refer to as a linear framework; or

B, small circles set in a regular pattern.

While in actual practice these two types sometimes overlap, the two categories are nevertheless important, since each originally represented a different aspect of the labyrinth myth. The evidence dealing with the origin of these two types is set out fully and with reproductions of the most relevant designs in the article already referred to,[2] and can here only be summarised in a manner that might appear arbitrary were it not possible for the student to follow it out in detail in the article mentioned.

[1] Published in Deacon, 5. [2] Layard, 6.